
2H

Information

General Session

Public Study Session on the Implications of Modifying the CSET: Single Subject Examinations (CSET: SS) to Assess Basic Skills in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics

AGENDA INSERT

Executive Summary: This agenda item fulfills the requirement specified in SB 1209 (Chap. 517, Stats. 2006) that the Commission hold a public study session to consider the implications of modifying the CSET: Single Subject examinations to assess basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Recommended Action: For information only.

Presenter: Dr. Phyllis Jacobson, Administrator,
Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators.

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of professional educators.
- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the performance of credential candidates.

June 2007

June 22, 2007

Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Attn: Ms. Cheryl Hickey

Dear Commission Members,

From the brief email I recently received regarding "Implications of Modifying the CSET: Single Subject Examinations (CSET: SS) to Assess Basic Skills in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics", I would strongly oppose this motion to address these additional skills.

I know first hand the trials and tribulations that many future science teachers face in either selecting K-12 science teaching as a career or electing to make a career switch into the teaching profession. In my advising sessions, I have had the pleasure of counseling many fine candidates about the SJSU single subject program. Each year I share with these potential teachers an extensive laundry list of requirements, which appears to grow annually. The list by my estimate includes 12-14 key components including the traditional CBEST exam (a measure of their English and Math proficiency = a duplicate of the proposed motion), a 30 minute prompted writing sample graded by SJSU staff using a rubric, a 3-4 hour technology exam, 30 hours of pre-professional experience (probably the most beneficial of the requirements), 2 distinct applications to the University and to the program, letters of recommendation, a resume, transcripts, fingerprints, knowledge of our constitution and US History, and finally Subject Matter Competent either through course work or the CSET exams series (a marvelous amalgamation of scientific scatology dealing with all sciences but not really measuring the individual's ability to communicate this information to youngsters).

Is it any wonder that we will be facing a shortage of teachers, science in particular, in the coming years? The CCTC needs to address this impending issue and be more realistic in establishing the fundamental standards necessary to begin this journey into public service. In today's world, if you have not noticed, teaching is not a very desirable occupation in terms of its financial compensation or its stature in the public mind. It certainly has undergone a revolution since I started teaching in 1966 and I am sad to say not for the better. CCTC cannot address this degradation but it certainly can be more supportive of making the process of becoming a certificated teacher more streamlined and less fraught with potholes of failure.

Please be very careful before adding another pothole to the process.

Thank you for time and attention to my concerns.

Michael Du Bois
San Jose State University
Science Education Program
Single Subject Credential Advisor